



**Directorate of
Intelligence**

~~Secret~~

25X1

The USSR and an Arab-Israeli Peace Settlement: A New Soviet Opportunity?

25X1

An Intelligence Assessment

~~Secret~~

SOV 82-10066
May 1982

Copy

450

Page Denied



**Directorate of
Intelligence**

Secret

25X1

The USSR and an Arab-Israeli Peace Settlement: A New Soviet Opportunity?

25X1

An Intelligence Assessment

*Information available as of 1 May 1982
has been used in the preparation of this report.*

25X1

This assessment was prepared by [redacted]
Office of Soviet Analysis. Comments and queries are
welcome and may be directed to the Chief, Current
Support Division, SOVA, [redacted]

25X1

This report has been coordinated with the National
Intelligence Council and the Directorate of
Operations. [redacted]

25X1

Secret
*SOV 82-10066
May 1982*

Secret

25X1

**The USSR and an Arab-Israeli
Peace Settlement: A New
Soviet Opportunity?**

25X1

Key Judgments

The Soviets see a new opportunity to get back onto center stage in the Arab-Israeli "peace process." They believe that Israel's return of the final occupied portions of the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt on 25 April marked the end of the Camp David process and will weaken US influence in the Middle East. They hope that these developments will eventually improve the prospects for the Brezhnev proposal for an international conference on the Arab-Israeli dispute.

25X1

Moscow has long sought a seat at the Arab-Israeli negotiating table with status equal to that of Washington. This would signify international acknowledgment of what it considers to be its "legitimate role" in the Middle East. But the USSR has been unable to arrange a peace conference on its own, partly because the United States and Israel oppose any Soviet participation and partly because many Arabs want the Soviet role to be only token.

25X1

Moscow has long considered its interest in the Middle East to be served best by a state of "no war, no peace" between the Arabs and Israel. Although the Soviets would derive some benefit from a settlement that they have helped formulate and that meets their policy objectives, they have a vested interest in a continuation of the Arab-Israeli dispute. The dispute impedes genuine improvement in US-Arab relations and increases Arab dependence on Soviet military and political backing.

25X1

The Soviets are suspicious of Saudi Crown Prince Fahd's eight-point peace plan, not only because it is a rival to their own but, more importantly, because it might exclude them from a settlement. They have not rejected the Fahd Plan outright, however, because they do not want to be left on the sidelines should the Arabs eventually unite behind it. They may also see some aspects in it that could be turned to their advantage.

25X1

The Brezhnev proposal has received widespread but lukewarm Arab support; even the support from some key allies in the region is soft. Several of these, especially Syria and the PLO, are opposed to recognizing Israel's existence and right to security—explicit points of the Brezhnev proposal—unless Israel makes certain concessions, which the Israelis would regard as unacceptable. However strongly they want the Arabs to unite behind a Moscow-sponsored peace conference, the Soviets will not pressure Syria

Secret

25X1

and the PLO to the point of damaging relations with them. Thus, although the proposal will remain a highly visible part of the Soviet Union's Middle East policy, it is the USSR's political and military support to its allies in the region that will continue to be predominant. [REDACTED]

25X1

Moscow realizes that several factors dampen the prospects for rapid progress on the Brezhnev proposal: continued Arab disunity, the potentially explosive situation in southern Lebanon, and Arab uncertainty over Egypt's future course. Nevertheless, the Soviets will continue to stump for their plan in order to lay the groundwork for acceptance when the time is more propitious. [REDACTED]

25X1

The primary Soviet goals over the next six months, therefore, will be to undermine American attempts at reviving the Camp David process and to isolate the United States in the Middle East. In particular, Moscow will seek to drive a wedge between Washington and the moderate Arab states. This will probably include a major effort to improve Soviet relations with Egypt and a lower key approach to the Saudis. At a minimum, the USSR will strive to prevent any Egyptian rapprochement with moderate Arab states on an explicitly anti-Soviet basis. [REDACTED]

25X1

Secret

Secret

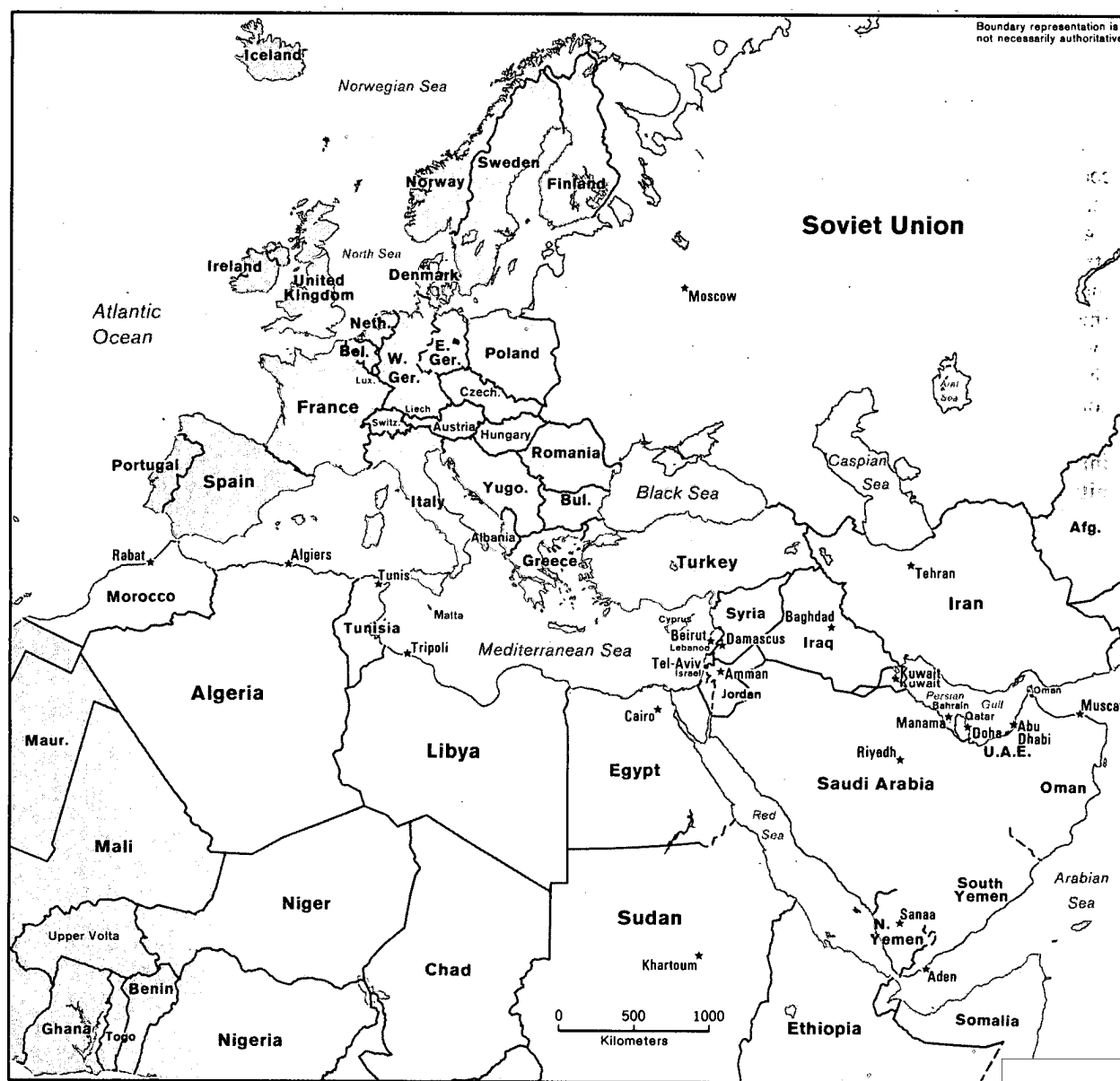
25X1

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Key Judgments	iii
Introduction	1
Objectives and Constraints	1
Background—In Search of a Role	1
The Brezhnev Proposal	2
Arab Views	3
Drumming Up Support	4
Moscow and the Fahd Plan	4
After Fez	6
An Approach to the Saudis?	7
Egypt Is the Key	8
Outlook	9

Secret

25X1



631701 4-82

25X1

Secret

vi

Secret

The USSR and an Arab-Israeli Peace Settlement: A New Soviet Opportunity?

25X1

Introduction

The Soviet Union sees Israel's return of the last occupied portions of the Sinai to Egypt on 25 April as marking the end of the Camp David process and, possibly, as foreshadowing a downturn in Egypt's cooperative relationship with the United States and Israel. The assassination in October 1981 of former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat removed Moscow's strongest opponent in the Arab world and the man most responsible for the exclusion of the Soviets from the negotiating table. Moscow realized quickly, however, that any potential benefit for the USSR from this development could not occur until Sadat's successor's hands were freed by the return of the Sinai. After that, the Soviets anticipate a weakening of US influence in the Middle East and a renewed opportunity to get back onto center stage in the peace process. They hope now to breathe new life into the Brezhnev proposal for an international conference on the Arab-Israeli dispute.

Objectives and Constraints

The Soviets do not view the Arab-Israeli peace process as an end in itself but as a means of enhancing their influence in the Middle East. Indeed, they have long recognized that their interests in the region are best served by a state of "no war, no peace." They would accept a settlement that satisfied their Arab allies and institutionalized a Soviet role in the region, but they do not necessarily want to solve the problem that has brought them substantial benefits. Moscow realizes that US support for Israel is the major obstacle to improvement in US-Arab relations and that the prolongation of the Arab-Israeli dispute increases the importance to the Arabs of Soviet military and political backing.

Moscow's policy toward a peace settlement is driven by the US-Soviet rivalry for influence in the Middle East. Its goal (realized briefly in 1969-70, in December 1973, and—on paper—in October 1977) has been to obtain a seat at the Arab-Israeli negotiating table

as a coequal of the United States. This would be an acknowledgment by the United States and the states in the region of the Soviet Union's "legitimate role" in the Middle East. More concretely, it would enhance the Soviets' ability to block any US-sponsored settlement that contained terms they believed to be harmful to their interests.

25X1

The opinions of their allies in the Middle East, however, are a major constraint on the Soviets' maneuverability with respect to a peace settlement. They would in fact refuse to back any settlement that Syria and the Palestinian Liberation Organization could not accept. For example, Moscow's public stance toward the peace plan of Saudi Crown Prince Fahd has been ambivalent, partly because the PLO has differing opinions of the plan and Syria was initially silent on it. If Moscow obtained a significant role in a peace conference, it might make some attempt to moderate its Arab allies' positions. Yet the USSR does not possess the leverage to make Syria and the PLO sign an agreement that did not meet their objectives, and it would not risk damaging bilateral relations by trying to do so.

25X1

Background—In Search of a Role

25X1

The Soviet Union has been a participant in the Middle East peace process since the creation of the Israeli state and the first Arab-Israeli war in 1948. As it expanded its presence in the region from the mid-1950s on, it played increasingly influential roles in negotiating the cease-fires that ended the conflicts in 1956, 1967, 1970, and 1973. Despite these efforts, the Soviets have been unable to sustain their influence in the peace process much past the end of each war. When the Arab states that Moscow had armed sought to develop the cease-fires into a genuine peace settlement, they turned toward the United States because of Washington's leverage with Israel. The observation

25X1

Secret

of one Israeli scholar, though somewhat oversimplified, hits at the heart of the Soviet problem: "The good services of the USSR in the Middle East are in demand only for making war. For peace everybody turns to Washington." [redacted]

In the UN debate that followed the Six-Day War in mid-1967, the Soviet Union took part in the formulation of Security Council Resolution 242, passed in November of that year. This resolution is still an integral part of the Soviets' Arab-Israeli peace plan despite the fact that their primary allies in the region have never endorsed it. The Soviet version of the resolution called for Israel's withdrawal from "all" the territories occupied during the Six-Day War, settlement of the Palestinian "refugee" problem, and guarantees for the territorial integrity and political independence of all states in the region. On all but the Palestinian issue, Moscow's stance has remained constant. [redacted]

During 1969 and 1970, Moscow participated in three sets of preliminary negotiations on an Arab-Israeli peace settlement. These were bilateral talks with Washington, the "four-power" talks (United States, USSR, Great Britain, and France), and negotiations held under UN auspices. Although this flurry of activity contributed to the achievement of a cease-fire in the "war of attrition" between Egypt and Israel in the summer of 1970, the attempt to formulate a comprehensive settlement foundered. [redacted]

In the aftermath of the October 1973 war, the USSR and the United States were coequals at the Arab-Israeli negotiating table—sharing the chairmanship of the Geneva Conference. However, after one meeting in December 1973, it was adjourned. The reconvening of such a conference has become a mainstay of Soviet Middle East policy. [redacted]

In a US-Soviet joint statement in October 1977, Moscow obtained US agreement to resurrect the Geneva Conference, only to be frustrated again, this

¹ With the growth of Palestinian nationalism and influence, the Soviets began in 1972 to refer in public statements to the "national rights" of the Palestinians (they had earlier criticized the idea of a Palestinian state). This attitude evolved into official support for a Palestinian "national home" in late 1974 and for a Palestinian "state" in early 1975. [redacted]



Soviet Foreign Minister Andrey Gromyko with US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger during the Geneva Conference on the Middle East, December 1973 [redacted]

time by Sadat. His visit to Jerusalem in November brought about a fundamental change in the nature of the Arab-Israeli problem and made the joint statement irrelevant. Sadat's initiative, which culminated in the Camp David accords—signed by the United States, Israel, and Egypt in March 1979—blocked Soviet efforts to have a say in a peace settlement. [redacted]

Moscow's opposition to the Camp David process has been implacable. The USSR has encouraged and capitalized on the hostility against the United States that the accords engendered in most of the Arab world, and as an alternative it has refurbished its own peace initiative. In 1979 the Soviets dropped the idea of reviving the Geneva Conference, which their Arab allies had never supported, and began promoting an international conference on the Middle East with the participation of all interested parties, including the PLO. [redacted]

The Brezhnev Proposal

President Brezhnev outlined this "new" approach at the Soviet Communist Party's 26th Congress in February 1981. The Soviets, believing the Camp David process to be at an impasse, perceived that the time

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1,

25X1

Secret

Secret

25X1

was ripe to gain the initiative. They evidently decided they should have their own proposal on the table and secure significant backing well before the scheduled return of the last portion of the Sinai to Egypt, more than a year away. []

Brezhnev claimed that the Camp David accords had undermined the search for a comprehensive settlement and had created the need for a "specially convened international conference" attended by the USSR, the United States, the Arab states, the PLO, Israel, and other interested countries.² He said that the "basic principles" governing such a conference should be:

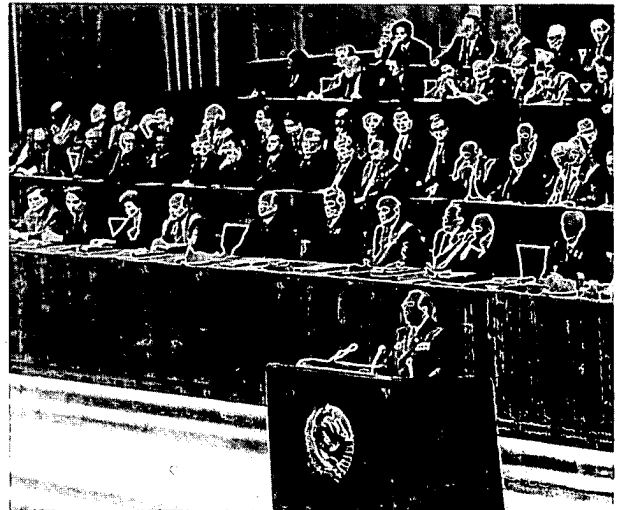
- Israeli withdrawal from all Arab territories seized in 1967.
- The creation of a Palestinian state.
- Guarantee of the security and sovereignty of all states in the region, including Israel.

The "details," Brezhnev asserted, would be the subject of the conference. []

Soviet officials have indicated in private that they envision a peace conference like the 1973 Geneva Conference, under the cochairmanship of the USSR and the United States. They have stressed that the USSR must be involved in negotiations "from the very beginning" and not be asked to attend a conference involving merely the ceremonial signing of a document already hammered out by other parties. Moscow has also stated its willingness to be a guarantor of a settlement reached under such circumstances. []

Although the Soviets have misgivings about a role for the United Nations, they have acknowledged it could play a part in the negotiations and subsequent guarantees. They would prefer not to have the United Nations involved, because the Soviet role might be diminished in such a broader forum, and China, as a Security Council member, could prove troublesome. []

² [] that the Arab states at the conference should be Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon and that the eight principal actors involved would have to agree upon including any additional participants. []



President Brezhnev addressing the Soviet Communist Party's 26th Congress, 23 February 1981

Camera Press ©

25X1

one of the problems the Soviets have with the Fahd Plan is its open-ended call for participation in the peace process by UN members.) The USSR, however, is unwilling to oppose its Arab allies, who strongly desire a UN role, and it has continued to make public reference—as Brezhnev did in his speech—to the United Nations' "useful" role in the Middle East peace process. []

25X1

25X1

Arab Views

Jordan, Kuwait, South Yemen, North Yemen, Syria and the PLO have endorsed the Brezhnev proposal with varying degrees of enthusiasm. Although this list is impressive at first glance, the support of some of them is soft and, indeed, contrary to their long-held positions on the Arab-Israeli dispute. The proposal's explicit recognition of Israel's existence and right to security poses a dilemma for Moscow: the radical Arabs will not approve it without Israeli concessions that Tel Aviv would regard as unacceptable. []

25X1

25X1

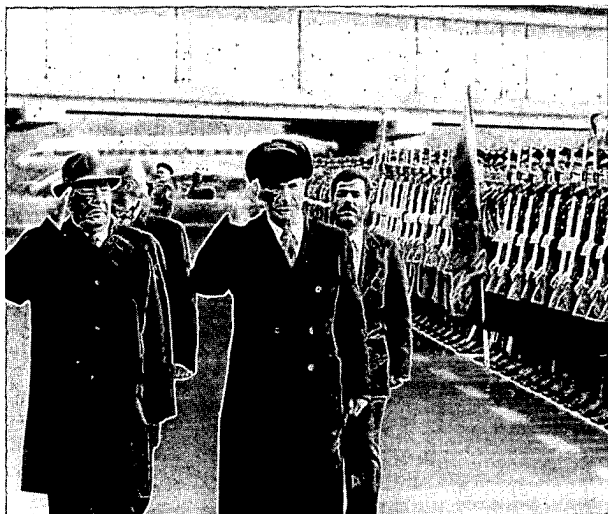
Syrian endorsement is critical for the proposal's chances, but it is especially tentative. President Assad has spoken favorably of the Brezhnev proposal in an interview with a French newspaper, and Damascus

25X1

25X1

Secret

Secret



Brezhnev seeing off Syrian President Assad after discussions in Moscow, October 1980

Sov Foto ©

supported it in communiques from meetings with officials of two East European countries in the summer of 1981. But the Syrians have not endorsed the proposal in any joint document with the Soviets. Mention of the proposal was conspicuously absent from the communique after the meeting in January 1982 of the two countries' foreign ministers. (This was all the more striking because before Brezhnev made his proposal Damascus had accepted communiques with wording in support of a general Soviet role in the peace process.) Syria also turned down a Soviet request in December 1981 that it sponsor an amendment to a UN resolution on the Middle East; the Soviets wanted the amendment to call for an international conference on the Arab-Israeli problem. [redacted]

Moscow's other key Arab ally, the PLO, is also less than enthusiastic about the Brezhnev proposal. Soviet officials have acknowledged that there are factions in the PLO that oppose the call for an international conference, although they believe that the proposal has support in the PLO's leadership. [redacted]

Drumming Up Support

In the fall of 1981, Moscow accelerated its campaign to win backers for the Brezhnev proposal. The Soviets believed that Israel's bombing of the Iraqi nuclear

facility and of Palestinian strongholds in Beirut during the summer had increased Arab hostility toward Israel and, by association, the United States and made the Brezhnev proposal more attractive. At the same time, they perceived a need to counter both the Fahd Plan and Washington's more assertive military policy in the region. (This policy included the announcement of a "strategic cooperation" agreement with Israel, increases in military aid to Egypt and the Sudan, the US-Egyptian joint military exercise "Bright Star," and the AWACS sale to Saudi Arabia.) Finally, the Soviets realized that Sadat's death in early October would interject new fluidity into the Arab-Israeli equation, and they hoped to take advantage of this. [redacted]

25X1

Brezhnev, himself, tried to broaden the appeal of the Soviet proposal. In a dinner speech for visiting North Yemeni President Salih in late October, he said that individual West European, North African, and South Asian states could take part in his proposed peace conference. The Soviets, who define "South Asia" as the Indian subcontinent, presumably had India in mind. Citing North Africa would make participation possible for countries friendly to the USSR such as Libya and Algeria. [redacted]

25X1

Brezhnev's inclusion of Western Europe may have been designed to give the impression that common ground can be found with the European Community peace initiative and to guard against US attempts to convince the West Europeans to join in the Camp David process. At the same time, the reference to Western Europe, specifically, appears to have been intended to exclude Romania, which—much to Moscow's irritation—has long sought to play peacemaker in the Middle East. Despite this propaganda bait, the Soviets continue privately to advocate a limit on the number of conference participants. [redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

Moscow and the Fahd Plan

Prince Fahd's eight-point peace plan, announced in August 1981, has created a major complication for Moscow. The Soviets are suspicious because it is a rival to their own plan and, more importantly, because they fear it would prevent them from having a say in the peace settlement. Moreover, they strongly suspect that the plan was inspired by the United States. [redacted]

25X1

25X1

Secret

Secret

The Brezhnev Proposal and the Fahd Peace Plan

Brezhnev Proposal

- *Israeli withdrawal from all Arab territories seized in 1967.*
- *Creation of a Palestinian state.*
- *Guarantees of the security and sovereignty of all states in the region, including Israel.*

Fahd Plan

- *Israel should withdraw from all Arab territories seized in 1967, including Arab Jerusalem.*
- *Israeli settlements built on Arab land after 1967 should be dismantled.*
- *Freedom of worship for all religions in the holy places should be guaranteed.*
- *Palestinian people have the right to return to their homes; those who do not wish to return should receive compensation.*
- *The West Bank and the Gaza Strip should be placed under UN auspices for a transitional period not exceeding several months.*
- *An independent Palestinian state should be set up with Jerusalem as its capital.*
- *All states in the region should be able to live in peace.*
- *The UN member states should guarantee the execution of these principles.*

Yet Moscow has refrained from rejecting the plan outright. It does not want to be left on the sidelines should the plan eventually gain widespread Arab support, and it may see some aspects in the proposal that could be used to its advantage. Finally, Moscow does not want to undermine its efforts to resume diplomatic relations with Riyadh, which were suspended by Stalin in the mid-1930s. []

Soviet ambivalence toward the Saudi plan was evident from the outset. The USSR commented favorably at the time of its announcement but reversed itself when

Palestinian opposition emerged. Since August, Soviet media have largely refrained from mentioning the plan, and when they have done so, it has been in either negative or neutral terms. []

25X1

As the Soviets have pointed out, there are similarities between the Fahd and Brezhnev initiatives. The most significant is recognition—explicit in the Soviet proposal, implicit in the Saudi plan—of Israel's right to security once it has withdrawn from all of the territories it occupied in 1967. []

25X1

Moscow has made it clear both publicly and in private, however, that there are "basic and important differences" between the proposals. The primary shortcomings of the Fahd Plan in Soviet eyes are that it does not envisage a role for the USSR and does not even mention the need for an international conference to formulate a settlement and then oversee its implementation. The Soviets are also critical of the plan's failure to refer to the PLO and are concerned that its explicit call for a UN role would bring an unmanageable number of countries into the peace process. []

25X1

Moscow has voiced its strong suspicion that the Saudi proposal was formulated in collaboration with Washington as another device to shut the USSR out of the Middle East. []

25X1

[] the Kremlin believes that Riyadh proposed the plan solely to prevent the Soviet Union from participating in the peace process. A commentary on Moscow's Radio Peace and Progress in the fall of 1981 claimed that the Saudis "yielded to the pressures of the Reagan administration" in submitting the Fahd Plan, which had been designed to "split the unity" of Arab opposition to the Camp David accords. A Soviet Foreign Ministry Middle East expert revealed a similar suspicion when he asked a US Embassy official in Moscow in November whether Washington and Riyadh had consulted together before the plan was announced. []

25X1

25X1

25X1

The USSR's attitude has also been influenced by those of its major Middle Eastern clients—Syria and the PLO. The chief of the Foreign Ministry's Near

25X1

Secret

Secret

Brezhnev and PLO leader Arafat during discussions in the Kremlin, October 1981 [redacted]



25X1

TASS ©

East Department told a Western ambassador in Moscow in January that the position the Arab states ultimately take on the Fahd Plan would determine the Soviet position. [redacted]

Syria's strong opposition to the Fahd Plan has solidified Moscow's own misgivings and narrowed Soviet room for maneuver. The Syrians, too, see a US hand in the plan and suspect that it is designed to revive the Camp David process and again exclude them from participation. Even if the Saudis were to muster broad support within the Arab world, the Soviets could hardly back the plan if their main ally in the region remained against it. [redacted]

The Soviets have also tried to take into account the views of PLO leadership, but these are divergent enough to create problems for them. Moscow has revealed its concern that some PLO leaders—particularly Yasir Arafat—have not shared its qualms about the Fahd Plan and have been susceptible to Saudi influence. In October, for example, Arafat made favorable remarks about the Saudi proposal in a press conference during his visit to Moscow, but the Soviets edited them out in reports in their media. [redacted]

The PLO eventually expressed its opposition to the Fahd Plan at the Fez summit of Arab leaders on 25 November, perhaps as a result of Soviet and Syrian pressure. [redacted] Damascus had lobbied with PLO factions against the plan. [redacted] the Soviet Ambassador to Syria and Syrian President Assad met with Arafat after his return from a 22 November trip to Riyadh. [redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

Moscow was thus relieved when the Fahd Plan was sidetracked at the Fez summit, which collapsed over failure to reach agreement on this issue. One Soviet radiobroadcast implicitly criticized the plan by stating that the summit had to be disbanded in order to formulate a "more responsible approach" to solving the Arabs' problems. A common theme in the Soviet coverage was the need for a unified Arab position (incorporating the views of Moscow's Arab allies) against the common enemy—"Israel and its American supporters." [redacted]

25X1

25X1

After Fez

The derailment of the Fahd Plan at Fez was a plus for Moscow, in that the Arabs did not take a united stand on a peace proposal that contained no role for the USSR. Moreover, it left the field clear for the Soviets

25X1

Secret

Secret

to bring attention to their own proposal. Moscow recognizes, however, that three main factors will probably delay significant movement on any comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace proposal:

- The collapse of the summit exacerbated Arab disunity, and there has been little progress toward unity since then. Assad, expressing disdain for the Fahd Plan, told a US Senator in January 1982 that the time was not ripe for an Arab peace initiative. The Soviet Ambassador to Jordan told the US Ambassador, also in January, that time was needed to prepare for a new Arab summit. In April, Syrian Foreign Minister Khaddam publicly reiterated Syria's opposition to a summit any time soon. Two of the Soviet Union's leading Middle East experts lamented the continuing lack of Arab unity during a Soviet television program on 24 April.
- Since mid-December, Arab attention has been focused on Israel's de facto annexation of the Golan Heights and the subsequent increase of tensions in southern Lebanon and in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. In such an atmosphere, the question of whether the hardline Arabs would be willing to recognize Israel's right to exist as a precondition for a peace conference is academic.
- Finally, there is no inclination in the Arab world to undertake a major new initiative before Egyptian policy under a new leader becomes clear. Now that it has regained control of the Sinai, Cairo will begin in earnest to seek a rapprochement with some of the moderate Arab countries that broke off relations after the Camp David accords. []

Moscow is therefore unlikely to mount any important new drive before late 1982, although it will continue to campaign for the Brezhnev proposal. A senior Soviet Middle East specialist admitted as much in a February *Pravda* article stating that an international conference on the Arab-Israeli dispute would need "appropriate preparation." In the interim, the Soviets will continue sounding out Arab opinion, cultivating their allies, and trying to improve relations with the moderate regimes in the region. With this purpose in mind, high-level Soviet Middle East specialists visited Arab capitals in November 1981 and in January 1982. []

When the Kremlin judges that the time is right to step up its campaign for a peace conference, it is likely to focus on obtaining the support of the moderate Arab states. Moscow knows that most of the moderates, although they distrust the USSR, recognize that it must play some role in any comprehensive peace settlement. []

25X1

An Approach to the Saudis?

To bolster its attempt to win moderate Arab support for its plan, Moscow might hint that the common ground between the Fahd and Brezhnev proposals could be developed into a plan acceptable to both sides. Its caution in not officially rejecting the Fahd Plan seems partly designed to leave the door open for such a development. []

25X1

25X1



25X1

Secret

Secret

Egyptian President Sadat and Brezhnev in the Kremlin during happier times, February 1972



25X1

Despite its distrust of the Soviets, Saudi Arabia may not be completely averse to feelers from Moscow. The Saudis have long wanted to limit the Soviet role in the peace process. [redacted]

[redacted] Fahd had drawn up the plan in part because Riyadh was alarmed during the summer by the support that the Brezhnev proposal had obtained in the Arab world. At the same time, however, the Saudi warned that Riyadh's position on a Soviet role in the peace process would depend upon Israeli actions and US responses to them. [redacted]

[redacted] the leadership remains highly suspicious of the USSR, Riyadh, like Moscow, has not shut any doors. [redacted]

Egypt Is the Key

The Soviets are keenly aware that no Arab-Israeli peace initiative can succeed without Egyptian agreement. The top Middle East expert of the CPSU Central Committee said in an interview with a Lebanese newspaper reporter in early February 1982 that if Egypt returned to the Arab fold after April, this would "increase the chances of a comprehensive settlement." Since the assassination of Sadat, the Soviets have expressed optimism that his successor, Hosni Mubarak, will eventually abandon the long-stalemated Camp David talks on Palestinian autonomy. [redacted]

The Soviets are attempting to hasten this abandonment. [redacted] shortly after Sadat's death they asked their Warsaw Pact allies to persuade Egyptian officials that Cairo would greatly benefit from a move away from the United States and toward a "genuinely nonaligned" policy. Since then, Soviet diplomats have also lobbied with their Egyptian counterparts for improved relations between Moscow and Cairo. Soviet media have given favorable treatment to Mubarak's departures from Sadat's policies, both foreign and domestic. The Kremlin undoubtedly was pleased by Mubarak's decision in January 1982 to ask more than 60 Soviet economic advisers to return to Egypt and by the February agreement in principle to exchange ambassadors. Nevertheless, it probably has no illusions that the two countries can soon return to the close relationship they had before July 1972. [redacted]

The Soviets hope that Mubarak's policy adjustments will include eventual acceptance of a role for them in a peace settlement. They have been making this point repeatedly to Egyptian diplomats and presumably were encouraged by Mubarak's acknowledgment in interviews with Western media in January that, as a superpower, the USSR cannot be denied such a role, although it should occur "at a later stage." [redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X6

25X6

25X6

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

Secret

Secret

Moscow's aim is to convince the Egyptians that, with the return of the Sinai and the probable end of the Camp David process, the only way to counter Israeli intransigence and American impotence regarding a broader settlement is to bring the USSR into the peace process at an early stage. Its task in doing so will be easier if, during the next few months, Israel moves against PLO strongholds in southern Lebanon or continues to accuse Egypt of violating the terms of the Sinai withdrawal agreement. []

Outlook

The USSR cannot arrange a peace conference on its own. The basic flaw in its position is that two of the most important principals to any settlement—the United States and Israel—oppose its participation. []

Washington has influence with states on both sides of the Arab-Israeli dispute, but Moscow does not. The Soviets realize that there is little or no prospect that Israel under Prime Minister Begin will ever consider the Brezhnev proposal. Nevertheless, they will continue to maintain periodic contacts with Israel like the meeting between Foreign Ministers Gromyko and Shamir at the UN General Assembly in September 1981. They will be looking toward a successor Labor government that might assume a more pragmatic negotiating stance. At the same time, there will be no letup in Soviet attempts to capitalize on Begin's frequent bold moves by portraying US and Israeli policy as identical. []

Despite periodic appeals to the United States for a return to the halcyon days of 1969-70, 1973, and 1977, when there was collaboration on the search for a Middle East peace settlement, Moscow knows that Washington will not soon drop its opposition to Soviet participation. Although the Soviets will keep trying to overcome this opposition, success in arranging a peace conference to their liking is not essential to their Middle East policy. What is essential is keeping their

proposal alive in order to maintain the dynamic of Soviet involvement, or at least the appearance of involvement, in the peace process. [] 25X1

Moscow will therefore continue working to broaden the base of support for its conference proposal; but, whether it succeeds or not, its primary goals over the next six months will be to scuttle American attempts to revive the Camp David process and to isolate the United States in the Middle East by driving a wedge between it and the moderate Arabs. This effort will probably involve a major drive to court Egypt after the return of the Sinai and a lesser effort to approach the Saudis. At a minimum, the Soviets will make every attempt to prevent any Egyptian rapprochement with moderate Arab states on an explicitly anti-Soviet basis. The USSR's fear, which two of its leading Middle East experts voiced in late April, is that Egypt and the United States will manage to "attach" other Arab states to the Camp David process—a development they labeled "creeping Camp David." [] 25X1

Moscow's maneuvering room in drumming up support for its conference proposal will continue to be constrained by the intransigence of its Arab allies, who are as unwilling as ever to make the concessions necessary to get all sides to sit down at the negotiating table. The Soviets cannot make any significant move toward melding the Fahd and Brezhnev proposals, for example, until the Syrians and the PLO themselves come to terms with both plans—especially with the central issue of recognizing Israel's right to exist. No matter how great the Soviet interest in forging a united Arab position on a Moscow-sponsored peace conference, Moscow will not apply pressure on Syria and the PLO to an extent that would damage its relationships with them. Thus, although "selling" the Brezhnev proposal will remain a highly visible part of the Soviet Union's Middle East policy, that policy will continue to be dominated by its political and military support to its allies in the region. [] 25X1

Secret

Secret

Secret